

A NEW SPECIES OF *PRUNUS* SUBGENUS *AMYGDALUS* (ROSACEAE) FROM COAHUILA, MÉXICO

JOSÉ A. VILLARREAL Q.

*Departamento de Botánica, Universidad Autónoma Agraria "Antonio Narro,"
Buena Vista, Saltillo, Coahuila, 25315, MÉXICO*

ABSTRACT

Prunus cercocarpifolia (subgenus *Amygdalus*) is described and illustrated from southern Coahuila. It is closely related to *P. microphylla* (H.B.K.) Hemsl. but differs from it in leaf and floral characters.

Four species of *Prunus* subgenus *Amygdalus* are known from México, *P. fasciculata* (Torr.) Gray and *P. fremontii* Wats. from the Sonoran Desert, *Prunus havardii* (W. Wight) W. Wight from the Chihuahuan Desert, and *P. microphylla* (H.B.K.) Hemsl. from central México. This new species adds one more to the Chihuahuan Desert area (See Standley 1922, and Rzedowski and Rzedowski 1979).

PRUNUS cercocarpifolia J. A. Villarreal, sp. nov. Fig. 1.

Prunus microphylla similis sed foliis elliptico-ovatis coriaceis, marginibus dentatis leviter revolutis, floribus minoribus et petalis orbicularibus differt.

Rhizomatous shrubs, 6–12 dm high; stems reddish-brown, somewhat zigzagged, young twigs closely tomentose-pubescent with crinkly trichomes, older stems glabrate, internodes 6–12 (–15) mm long, short-shoot spurs 3–10 mm long; stipules linear-subulate, 3–5 mm long; leaves with petioles 2–5 mm long, leaf-blades coriaceous, elliptic-ovate to elliptic-oblongate, 10–20 mm long, 6–18 mm wide, apex rounded, base cuneate, margins dentate, slightly revolute, with 5–10 apiculate teeth per side, lower margin entire, lamina hirtellous with short erect hairs at the base, strigose-hispidulous on the upper surface, and longer appressed hairs on the under surface, veins impressed above and prominently raised beneath; flowers unisexual, subsessile, solitary or few at the nodes; hypanthium glabrate, campanulate-obdeltate, 1.5–2 mm long with 5 deltate lobes; petals white, orbicular, 2 mm long, short-clawed; stamens 15 in 3 series; fruit elliptic, 12–15 mm long, 8–12 mm wide, brown-yellowish, highly pubescent, mesocarp thin.

TYPE: MÉXICO. COAHUILA: Mpio. Saltillo, Rancho Los Angeles, Potrero #1, 48 km al S de Saltillo, carr. 54, 26°06'N, 101°06'W, 1900 m Partes bajas de la Sierra, pastizal de *Stipa* y *Bouteloua*, Jun 1987, H. Gonzales 046 (HOLOTYPE: MEXU; ISOTYPES: ANSM, TEX).



FIG. 1. *Prunus cercocarpifolia* Villarreal. A. Habit; B. Leaf; C. Flower; D. Fruit.

Additional collections examined: Type locality, 7 Sep 1987, J. A. Villarreal 4185 (ANSM); 18 Jun 1988, I. Cabral 1063 (ANSM).

Prunus cercocarpifolia grows in colonies in the lower slopes of a small sierra on calcareous soils commonly mixed with grasses and other shrubs. The flowering time is in March-April, the flowers appearing before the leaves. The leaves are similar to those of some species of *Cercocarpus*, with which it was originally confused. Therefore, I name the species for this resemblance. The fruits mature and fall in August; they are generally perforated by some insect larvae. Little wasps of the family Eupelmidae were found inside the stones.

Prunus cercocarpifolia is most closely related to *P. microphylla* (H.B.K.) Hemsl., which it keys to in Standley (1922). The differences are that *P.*

cercocarpifolia possesses young twigs with crinkly trichomes, leaves more coriaceous, somewhat rugose above, blades from elliptic-oblongate to ovate with teeth more prominent and glands occasionally present in the lower teeth. Further, the flowers of *P. cercocarpifolia* are smaller and have orbicular cucullate petals.

Prunus microphylla (H.B.K.) Hemsl., is known from the states of San Luis Potosi, Hidalgo, México, and Distrito Federal in central México. It possesses young twigs with straight trichomes, leaves not coriaceous nor rugose, blades from elliptic to oblongate with teeth smaller and glandular. The flowers are 2.5 – 3 mm long and have obovate petals. (Examined specimens: ANSM, MEXU and TEX).

The two related species can be separated by the key that follows:

1. Young twigs closely tomentose-pubescent with crinkly, irregularly oriented trichomes; leaves broadly elliptic to elliptic-oblongate or elliptic-ovate, somewhat coriaceous, slightly rugose above with the lateral veins impressed, the teeth eglandular or the lower teeth occasionally with glands, the upper surface sparsely to moderately hispidulous or strigose-hispidulous with prominent, slender trichomes 0.2 – 0.4 mm long; body of the hypanthium 1.5 – 2 mm long, obdeltate *P. cercocarpifolia*
1. Young twigs with straight, retrorse-spreading trichomes; leaves narrowly elliptic to broadly elliptic-oblongate, thick but not coriaceous, smooth above, the midvein impressed but not the laterals, all teeth with glandular tips, the upper surface glabrous or very sparsely pubescent with barely noticeable trichomes; body of the hypanthium 2 – 2.5 mm long, campanulate *P. microphylla*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Dr. Marshall C. Johnston for providing the Latin diagnosis and Dr. G. Nesom for comments on the manuscript. I also thank Miguel A. Carranza for preparing the illustration and to H. Gonzales M., J. Frias and R. Canales for showing me the locality.

REFERENCES

- MACVAUGH, R. 1951. A revision of the North American black cherries (*Prunus serotina* Ehrh., and relatives). *Brittonia* 7(4):279 – 315.
- RZEDOWSKI, J. y G. C. de RZEDOWSKI. 1979. Flora Fanerogámica del Valle de México. I. (Rosaceae, *Prunus*). C.E.C.S.A. México, p. 275.
- STANDLEY, P. C. 1922. Trees and shrubs of México. (*Prunus*). Contr. U.S. Natl. Herb. 23(2):338 – 343.